

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes _____
no ☒

Property Name: Perry Hall Elementary School Inventory Number: BA-3217
Address: 9021 Belair Road (US 1) Historic district: yes ☒ no
City: Baltimore Zip Code: 21236 County: Baltimore County
USGS Quadrangle(s): White Marsh
Property Owner: Baltimore County Board of Education Tax Account ID Number: 04111102057834
Tax Map Parcel Number(s): 1114 Tax Map Number: 72
Project: US 1 from Cottingham Road to Joppa/India Rd Improvements Agency: SHA
Agency Prepared By: SHA
Preparer's Name: Kathryn Barrett Date Prepared: 10/02/2007
Documentation is presented in: Maryland Historical Trust (MD SHPO)
Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: Eligibility recommended ☒ Eligibility not recommended
Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G
Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:
Name of the District/Property: _____
Inventory Number: _____ Eligible: yes Listed: yes
Site visit by MHT Staff yes ☒ no Name: _____ Date: _____

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

Perry Hall Elementary School is located on Belair Road near the intersection of Joppa Road in the unincorporated Perry Hall community. This community is located approximately ten miles from Baltimore. This area of Belair Road is characterized by late twentieth-century commercial development and some early twentieth-century houses converted into businesses. The elementary school is bordered by the Perry Hall Middle School, a gas station, restaurants and small commercial and retail buildings. Built in 1956, Perry Hall Elementary is a common example of mid-twentieth-century suburban public school construction.

In the period following World War II, Maryland's public education system experienced massive growth and expansion. The war had brought increased industrial development and influx of new residents to nearby Baltimore. Like many small communities, the once rural agricultural area of Perry Hall along the Baltimore and Jerusalem Turnpike (now Belair Road) quickly responded to the growth with a building boom of residential and commercial structures, and Perry Hall became a suburb easily accessible from the city. A resultant of the mass suburbanization and increased birth-rate caused a particularly acute problem for Baltimore County's education infrastructure. School boards across the state struggled to expand fast enough to accommodate the growing number of students (Callcott 1985, 237).

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended _____ Eligibility not recommended ☒
Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G

MHT Comments:

Jim Tenenbaum ✓
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

11/29/07
Date

N/A
Reviewer, National Register Program

Date

200703647

Baltimore County felt the effects of the bulging school population, particularly in those areas that surrounded Baltimore City, as dense suburban development replaced the former agricultural landscape. In June of 1950, the Baltimore County Public Schools reported that "Today, Baltimore County is in the midst of an emergency school construction program to care for a rapidly increasing public school population that has gained 10,000 pupils in the past seven years" (Baltimore County Public Schools, 1950). Three years later, the county's public school population had been increased by more than 12,000 pupils, and by 1960, the school-age population doubled from that in 1950. School board officials attributed the substantial school population growth to the three interrelated factors of residents, homes, and births (Baltimore County Public Schools, 1953).

Between 1946 and 1954, 67 new public schools or additions were either completed, underway, or in planning in Baltimore County. This list included the 24-room Perry Hall Elementary School, with construction completed in 1956 for a capacity of 700 students. Prior to the construction of the new elementary school, students in the Perry Hall community were attending the Perry Hall School, which was constructed in 1925 (David Marks 2007).

During the architectural planning phase of the new school's construction in 1954, Brown vs. the Board of Education mandated the desegregation of the nation's schools. Perry Hall Elementary School was integrated by 1958, though Baltimore County as a whole did not take any significant strides to desegregate until the 1960s. In 1965, over half the African-American student population in the county remained enrolled in schools composed of all African-American students (Human Relations Commission of Baltimore County 1965).

With the rapid school expansion program, speed and low-cost became the predominant factors in the design, materials, and methods of construction for public schools. The average time to build a new school in Baltimore County was three and a quarter years, with one year to acquire a school site, one year for preparing plans, and one and a quarter years for construction (Baltimore County Public Schools 1954). As with other public buildings of the era, school designers chose an aesthetic that they believed emphasized modernity and technological advancement. School design of this era had more in common with factories than with one-room rural schools or any other historic prototype. This modern aesthetic is reflected in the design of the Perry Hall Elementary School- a vastly different change to the original three-room brick school built in 1874 for the small community.

Following the construction in 1956, Perry Hall Elementary School served as a community meeting place, both historically and currently. Historic photographs picture May Day events in the rear of the building, and spring festivals on the school grounds. The school is the site of the Perry Hall Christmas Tree, where each December a lighting ceremony attracts families from the community (David Marks 2006). Eventually four additional elementary schools were built to serve the growing community. The school currently hosts approximately 530 students.

The Perry Hall Elementary School building is situated on the east side of Belair Road. The school grounds share ball fields with the adjacent Perry Hall Middle School. A playground, basketball courts, parking lot and two pre-fabricated modular buildings occupy the school property. The site also features concrete marble rings (added in the late 1990s). A copper water fountain, contemporary with the 1950s construction period, is also found on the site. The driveway runs in front of the school building leading traffic from Belair Road to Joppa Road. A plaque recognizing World War II soldiers who served from the community is placed at the base of the school flagpole in front of the school.

The two-story school building is a modified long rectangle in plan, with a projecting bay in the front and two, one-story wings extending from the back. Asymmetrical in composition, the overall design reflects the mass-produced, non-decorative aesthetic associated with Modern architecture. Like numerous 1950s suburban schools across the country, Perry Hall Elementary is characterized by its low, utilitarian, flat-roofed form, with bands of metal casement windows, emphasized horizontality and subtle Modernist styling.

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Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

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Facing west, the façade hosts an off-centered main entrance sheltered by a metal awning supported by metal posts. The gymnasium wing projects from the long rectangular front elevation. The majority of the building is clad in buff-colored brick veneer, though the gymnasium bay features a darker color brick with deeply raked mortar joints emphasizing characteristic horizontal lines of a Modernist building. Metal letters adhered to a panel of porcelain tiles spell out "Perry Hall Elementary School" on the gymnasium bay. This projecting bay, with its geometric features, is the focal point of the façade, rather than the main entrance. This further expresses the Modernist styling. The front and back elevations of the building are slightly recessed between brick side walls. This feature is also repeated in the gymnasium bay.

Three bands of casement windows run the length of the building on the front and back elevations. The middle row of windows is composed of functioning casements, while the top and bottom rows are fixed windows. The flat roof is finished with metal bands composing the cornice and angled metal soffits. The side elevations of the main rectangular massing features double metal doors with a column of fixed windows above. The rear elevation is composed of the two, one-story wings extending from the back. One wing is occupied by the Perry Hall Recreation and Parks Council and is connected to the northeast side of main building by a hyphen. The other wing extends from the southeast side of the building and houses classrooms.

The workmanship reflects the preference for speedy construction methods that marked this period of suburban development. While the property itself maintains the feeling of a 1950s public elementary school, the late twentieth-century commercial development on that dominates the immediate surrounding area diminishes its association with mid-twentieth century suburban growth. Though the Perry Hall community celebrates unique traditions and historical events, it shares a common thread of the suburbanization trend experienced throughout the country in post- World War II America and, similarly, the Perry Hall Elementary school design is a very typical example of a popular 1950s architectural style used for institutional, industrial and civic architecture.

Perry Hall Elementary School is generally associated with trends in mid-twentieth century suburban public education, however, the school is not associated with any specific events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history and the school does not uniquely illustrate an important aspect of America's suburbanization. Therefore, the school is not eligible under Criterion A. The school is not eligible under Criterion B for an association with persons significant in our past. The school is not eligible under Criterion C for its design or construction. While the building as a whole has not undergone substantial alterations, it is a non-distinct example of a ubiquitous property type. It does not represent the work of a master or possess high artistic values. The integrity of the school is diminished by surrounding commercial development. Due to prior disturbance, the property is not likely to yield information important in prehistory or history and is not eligible under Criterion D.

References

Baltimore County Public Schools. Baltimore County Looks Ahead in Education, A Projected Program. June 1950.

Baltimore County Public Schools. A Brief Look Backward and Ahead at Baltimore County's Bulging School Population. October 1953.

Baltimore County Public Schools. A School System Grows. April 1954.

Callcott, George H. Maryland and America 1940 to 1980. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985.

Human Relations Commission of Baltimore County. Report on Education. 1965

Marks, David. Personal Communication with Mr. Marks, Historian of the Perry Hall Improvement Association. September 25,

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Perry Hall Elementary School

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2007.

Marks, David. Perry Hall's Schools: The Heart of the Community. Baltimore County Library on-line, www.bcplonline.org/info/history/hist_pe_schools.html. Revised November, 2006.

National Park Service. National Register Bulletin: Historic Residential Suburbs. U.S. Department of the interior, www.cr.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/suburbs. Accessed on August 16, 2006.

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MHT Comments:

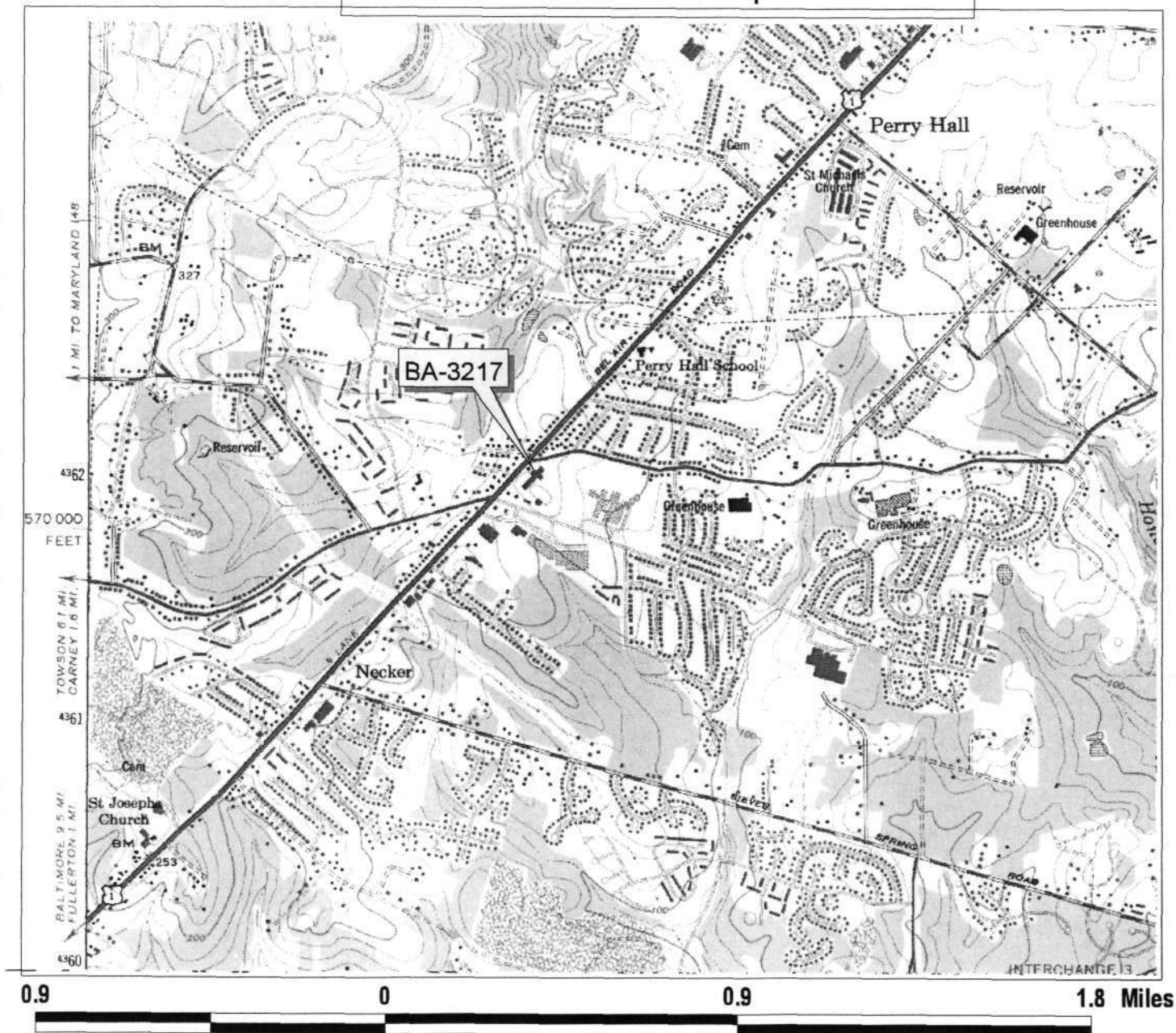
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

Date

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Date

Perry Hall Elementary School, BA-3217
Baltimore County
SHA Project US 1 from Cottingham RD to Joppa Rd
White Marsh Quad Map



BA-3217



MINP# BA-3217

Perry Hall Elementary School

Baltimore Co., MD

SHA

March 2007

MD SWPO

22:00 MB YS 00 01 30 07
View of the front facade looking northeast.

Photo 1/



PERRY HALL
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

MDHP # BA-3217

Perry Hall Elementary School
Baltimore Co., MD

SHA

March 2007

MD SHPO

View of the Front Facade looking
Southeast.

2/15

PERRY HALL

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



MIHP# BA-3217

Perry Hall Elementary School
Baltimore Co MD.

SHA

March 2007

MD SHPO

View of the gymnasium bay on the
Front (Northwest) Facade.

3/15



MINP# BA-3217

Perry Hall Elementary School
Baltimore Co., MD

SWA

March, 2007

MD SWPO

028860 3-27 1524 110

2 00 00 00 00 00 00 00
View of the main entrance on the
front of the building.

4/15



MHP # BA-3217

Perry Hall Elementary School
Baltimore Co., MD

SHA

March, 2007

MD SHAPO

18 CR MD 40 E F M1 20 07
View of the facade looking northwest.

5/15



ONE WAY

MIND# BA-3217

Perry Hall Elementary School
Baltimore Co., MD

81AA

March 2007 038860 1E/27 5001.11

MD SWPO

15 00 MO 10 00 01 24 07

View of the northeast elevation.

6/15



MIHP# BA-3217

Perry Hall Elementary School
Baltimore Co. MD

SWA-

March 2007

MD SWPO

038860 12/27/07 45824 11

11 00 10 40 D-1 01 30 07

View of the back elevation looking west.

7/15



MIHP# RA-3217

Perry Hall Elementary School
Baltimore Co., MD

SHA

March 2007

MD SHPO

039860 15 27 5924 11

14 00 MO NO CO 01 30 07
View of the back (Southeast) elevation
with the hyphen.

8/15



MINP# BAZ217

Berry Hall Elementary School
Baltimore Co., MD

SHA -

MD SHPO

070850 0 01 5R24 117

View of the back elevation between
the two back wings,

9/15



MIHP# RA 3217

Perry Hall Elementary School
Baltimore Co., MD

SHA

March 2007

MD SWPO

032960 5 07 5224 115

View of the Southwest Corner of
the building.

10/15



MINP # RA-3217

Perry Hall Elementary School
Baltimore Co., MD

SHA-

MDSHPO

279560 5/27/2024 11:11

View of the South west Side of the Building.

11/15



MINP# BA-3217

Perry Hall Elementary School
Baltimore CO, MD

SWA-

March 2007

MD SWPO

View of the front facade looking
northeast

12/15



MIHP# BA-3217

Perry Hall Elementary School
Baltimore Co, MD

SHA

March 2007

038860 14 27 SR2

MD SWPO

View of the basketball Courts on the
property.

B/IS



MHP# BA-3217

Perry Hall Elementary School
Baltimore Co, MD

SH 4

March 2007

MD SHPO

View of the ball fields shared with
the adjacent middle school.

14/15



MI4P# BA-3217

Perry Hall Elementary School
Baltimore Co, MD

SNA

March 2007

MD SNA PG

View of the back play yard.

15/15